

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

This Supplemental Amendment expressly withdraws the Request for Reconsideration filed February 25, 2005.

Claims 15 and 16 are active in this case. Claims 2-7 and 9-14 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by this Supplemental Amendment to be pursued in a Continuation Application. This amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.116 which after final rejection permits entering of amendments canceling claims, complying with any requirement of form expressly set forth in a previous Office Action, or presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal. The present amendment cancels all but claims indicated as reciting allowable subject matter. This amendment does not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. It is therefore respectfully requested that the present amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. §1.116. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issues: Claims 2-7 and 9-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Markandey (U.S. Patent No. 6,340,992) in view of Hiroi (U.S. Patent No. 6,204,887); and Claims 15 and 16 are indicated as allowed. Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter as recited in Claims 15 and 16.

As Claims 2-7 and 9-14 are canceled by this amendment leaving only allowable Claims 15 and 16, the Applicant respectfully submits that the outstanding rejection is rendered moot.

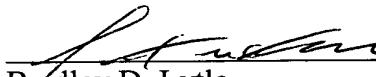
CONCLUSION

If the Examiner believes any additional formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience.

Consequently, in view of the current amendment and in light of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application, including Claims 15 and 16 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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